

**From:** Whitford, Debbie - FNS  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 02, 2013 7:47 AM  
**Subject:** RE: WIC and Furloughed Federal Employees

Below are a series of questions and answers that can be shared with State agencies:

Several questions have arisen regarding the eligibility of furloughed Federal employees for WIC benefits. Following is guidance in addressing these issues.

1. Q -- How should WIC income eligibility for benefits be determined for persons affected by the Federal shutdown?

A -- In determining the income eligibility of categorically eligible persons affected by the Federal shutdown, State/local agencies should use the same policies/procedures normally used to assess the income eligibility of a person experiencing a temporary loss of income such as temporarily laid-off workers.

2. Q -- If persons affected by the Federal shutdown are determined fully eligible for WIC benefits, are State/local agencies required to certify them for full certification periods?

A -- No. The WIC regulations (Section 246.7(g)(2) permit the use of shorter certification periods. Given the fact that the current Federal shutdown is temporary, we would encourage State agencies to use a shorter certification period (e.g., one month). If the shutdown continues for an extended period of time, State/local agencies can subsequently reassess whether WIC benefits should be provided for a longer period of time.

3. Q -- If furloughed employees are ordered back to work and receive retroactive pay, will such employees and/or

their family members that receive WIC benefits be required to repay or pay back the value of the WIC benefits they received?

A -- No. The WIC Program has no policy which requires the value of benefits to be paid back in such circumstances.

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